

REMARKS

Claims 4-17, 19 and 20 are currently pending in the application. Claim 20 has been amended and claims 1-3 and 18 have been canceled. Applicant expressly reserves the right to file one or more continuation applications directed to the subject matter of the canceled claims. Reconsideration and withdrawal of all pending rejections in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Present Amendment is proper for entry

Applicant respectfully submits that the instant amendment is proper for entry after final rejection. Applicant notes that no question of new matter is presented nor are any new issues raised in entering the instant amendment of the claims and that no new search would be required. Moreover, Applicant submits that the instant amendment places the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant requests the Examiner to enter the instant amendment, consider the merits of the same, and indicate the allowability of the present application and each of the pending claims. Applicant notes, in particular, that all of the rejected claims have been canceled and that the allowable claim has been presented in independent form. Accordingly, the only remaining claims are claims which are or should be indicated to be allowed.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the indication that claims 4-17 and 19 are allowed and that

claim 20 contains allowable subject matter and would be allowable if presented in independent form. Accordingly, as claim 20 has been presented in independent form, Applicant submits that claim 20 should be indicated to be allowed. Furthermore, Applicant submits that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance for the following reasons.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejection

Claims 1-3 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,792,417 issued to PUNAKO in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,548,871 issued to TRETHEWEY.

Applicant traverses this basis of rejection for the reasons already made of record. However, in view of the fact that claims 1-3 and 18 have been canceled in order to advance prosecution of the allowed/allowable claims, Applicant submits that this basis of rejection is now moot.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the above-noted rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant submits that all of the rejections have been overcome, and that the claims are patentably distinct from the prior art of record and in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue, and to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below, if needed. Applicant hereby makes a written conditional petition for

extension of time, if required. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to **Deposit Account No. 09-0457 (Endicott)**.

Respectfully submitted,
Manfred BOLDY

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew M. Calderon", written over a horizontal line.

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